

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1, 7, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 26 and 28-31 in accordance with the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An electronic news system for managing an electronic message having a message content and a reply to said message, comprising:

storage means for storing plural fixed form replies inputted in advance of the electronic message, stored separately from the electronic message and having reply contents independent of the message content of the electronic message allowing use of said plural fixed form replies with other electronic messages;

input means for inputting the electronic message without information about a reply to said message;

output means for outputting the message with said plural fixed form replies to the message retrieved from said storage means, said plural fixed form replies independent of the message; and

control means for accepting ~~only a selection of a selected~~ fixed form reply which fits the electronic message out of the outputted plural fixed form replies as the reply to the message.

2. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 1, further comprising:

fixed form reply managing means for managing a plurality of fixed form replies by data for respectively specifying said plurality of replies, and

totaling means for totaling a number of the selections of each of fixed form replies as the reply to the message, and storing results of the totalization of each of fixed form replies to the message in relation to said specifying data.

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 1, wherein said control means has means for accepting an input of a free form reply to the

message, and managing the inputted free form reply in relation to data to specify said message.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 2, wherein said control means has means for accepting an input of a free form reply to the message, and managing the inputted free form reply in relation to data to specify said message.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 1, wherein said fixed form reply is one kind or the combination of plural kinds of data selected from a plurality of kinds including text, still picture, speech, sound and moving pictures.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 1, wherein said control means includes means for causing said output means to output data for a fixed form reply of the kind which fits contents of the message.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An electronic news system including a client apparatus and a server apparatus which manages an electronic message having a message content and a reply to said message transmitted from the client apparatus, said client apparatus comprising:

storage means for storing plural fixed form replies, inputted in advance of the message and stored separately from the electronic message and having reply contents independent of the content of the electronic message allowing use of said plural fixed form replies with other electronic messages;

input means for inputting the electronic message without information about a reply to said message;

output means for outputting the message with said plural fixed form replies to the message retrieved from said storage means, said plural fixed form replies being independent of the message;

control means for accepting only a selection of a selected fixed form reply which fits the electronic message out of the outputted plural fixed form replies as the reply to the message; and

communication control means for transmitting the selection to the server apparatus.

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 7, wherein the client apparatus comprises means for accepting an input of a free form reply to the

message in said control means, and the server apparatus comprises free form reply managing means for managing the free form reply transmitted from the client apparatus in relation to data for specifying said message.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An electronic news system including a client apparatus and a server apparatus which manages electronic messages having corresponding message content and transmitted from the client apparatus, comprising:

 said server apparatus comprising:

 storage means for storing plural fixed form replies, inputted in advance of the electronic messages and stored separately from the electronic messages and having reply contents independent of the message content of the electronic message allowing use of said plural fixed form replies with other electronic messages;

 communication control means for transmitting said plural fixed form replies to the client apparatus;

 said client apparatus comprising:

 receiving control means for receiving said plural fixed form replies sent from the server apparatus, said plural fixed form replies independent of the electronic messages;

 input means for inputting the electronic message without information about a reply to said message;

 output means for outputting the message with said plural fixed form replies to the message;

 control means for accepting ~~only a selection out of a selected~~ fixed form reply which fits the electronic message out of the outputted plural form replies as the reply to the message; and

 transmission control means for controlling the transmission for transmitting the selected reply to the server apparatus.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 9, wherein the client apparatus comprises fixed form reply managing means for managing a plurality of fixed form replies by data for respectively specifying said plurality of replies, and communication control means for transmitting specifying data of the selected reply to the server apparatus as a reply, and the server apparatus comprises communication control means for receiving the specifying data transmitted from the client apparatus as a reply, and totaling means for totaling a number of the selections of each reply as the reply to the message based on said

specifying data, and storing the results of the totalization of each reply to said message in relation said specifying data.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 9, wherein the client apparatus comprises means for accepting an input of a free form reply to the message in said control means, and the server apparatus comprises free form reply managing means for managing free form reply transmitted from the client apparatus in relation to data for specifying said message.

12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 10, wherein the client apparatus comprises means for accepting an input of a free form reply to the message in said control means, and the server apparatus comprises free form reply managing means for managing the free form reply transmitted from the client apparatus in relation to data for specifying said message.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An electronic news system including a client apparatus and a server apparatus which manages an electronic message having a message content and a reply to said message transmitted from the client apparatus,

 said server apparatus comprising:

 storage means for storing a first set of plural fixed form replies, stored separately from the electronic message, independent from the electronic message, and inputted in advance of the message and having reply contents independent of the message content of the electronic message allowing use of the first set of plural fixed form replies with other electronic messages;

 communication control means for transmitting for the first set of plural fixed form replies to the client apparatus,

 said client apparatus comprising:

 receiving control means for receiving the first set of plural fixed form replies sent from the server apparatus;

 storage means for storing a second set of plural fixed form replies, stored separately from the message;

 input means for inputting the electronic message without information about a reply to said message;

 output means for outputting the message with the first set of plural fixed form replies or

the second set of plural fixed form replies;

control means for accepting only a selectionselected fixed form reply out of the outputted the first set of plural fixed form replies or the second set of plural fixed form replies based on the category of the message as the reply to the message; and

means for controlling the transmission for transmitting the selected reply out of the first set of plural fixed form replies or the second set of plural fixed form replies to the server apparatus.

14. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 13, wherein the server apparatus comprises fixed form reply managing means for managing a plurality of first fixed form replies with data for respectively specifying said replies, and means for transmitting the specifying data of the first fixed form reply to the client apparatus along with said reply,

the client apparatus comprises fixed form reply managing means for managing a plurality of second fixed form replies with the data for respectively specifying said replies, and means for causing said transmission controlling means to transmit the selected second reply or the selected specifying data of the first reply to the server apparatus as a reply,

said server apparatus further comprises means for transmitting specifying data of the second fixed form reply to the client apparatus, and means for receiving the second reply or specifying data of the first reply transmitted from the client apparatus as a reply in said communication control means, and totaling means for totaling a number of the selections of each reply as the reply to the message based on said specifying data, and storing the results of the totalization of each reply to said message in relation to said specifying data,

said client apparatus further comprises means for receiving the specifying data of the second fixed form reply sent from the server apparatus in said receiving control means, and means for outputting the stored second fixed form reply based on said specifying data in said output means.

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 13, wherein the client apparatus comprises means for accepting an input of a free form reply to the message in said control means, and the server apparatus comprises free form reply managing means for managing the free form reply transmitted from the client apparatus in relation to data for specifying said message.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An electronic news system according to claim 14, wherein the client apparatus comprises means for accepting an input of a free form reply to the message in said control means, and the server apparatus comprises free form reply managing means for managing the free form reply transmitted from the client apparatus in relation to the data for specifying said message.

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A recording medium readable by a computer which manages an electronic message having a message content and a reply to said message, comprising:

program code means for causing said computer to store plural fixed form replies in said computer, the plural fixed form replies being stored in advance of the electronic message and separately from the electronic message and having reply contents independent of the content of the electronic message allowing use of said plural fixed form replies with other electronic messages;

program code means for inputting the electronic message without information about a reply to said message;

program code means for causing said computer to output the message with data for plural fixed form replies a reply to the message, said plural fixed form replies for a reply independent of the message; and

program code means for causing said computer to accept only a selection of a selected fixed form reply ~~which fits the electronic message~~ out of the outputted plural fixed forms replies as the reply to said message.

18. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A recording medium according to claim 17, further comprising:

program code means for causing said computer to manage a plurality of fixed form replies with data for respectively specifying said replies; and

program code means for causing said computer to total a number of the selections of each reply as the reply to the message and store the results of totaling the totalization of each reply to said messages in relation to said specifying data.

19. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A recording medium according to claim 17, further

comprising:

program code means for causing said computer to accept an input of a free form reply to the message; and

program code means for causing said computer to manage the inputted free form reply in relation to data for specifying said message.

20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A recording medium according to claim 18, further comprising:

program code means for causing said computer to accept an input of the free form reply to the message; and

program code means for causing said computer to manage the inputted free form reply in relation to data for specifying said message.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A message system for an electronic message having a message content, comprising:

a reply data storage device storing plural fixed form replies, each of the plural fixed form replies containing replies having reply contents independent of the message content of the electronic message allowing use of the plural of fixed form replies with other electronic messages;

an input device for inputting the electronic message without information about a reply to said message;

a controller receiving the message from a host and allowing a user to retrieve a reply which fits the electronic message out of the plural fixed form replies stored in the reply data storage device, the plural fixed form replies being independent of the message, inputted in advance of the message, and stored separately from the message; and

an output device outputting the selected reply to the host.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message system as recited in claim 21 wherein, the controller selects a fixed form reply based on a category of the message.

23. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message system as recited in claim 21 wherein, the reply can include video or audio data.

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message system as recited in claim 21 wherein, the host receives a plurality of the outputted selected fixed form replies and displays a bar graph illustrating a frequency of responses.

25. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer readable storage medium storing a computer program instructing a computer to perform operations for an electronic message having a message content, comprising:

storing plural fixed form replies containing a plurality of replies and contents independent of the content of the electronic message allowing use of the plural fixed form replies with other electronic messages;

inputting the electronic message without information about a reply to said message;

storing the message separately from the plural fixed form replies, the message being inputted after the plural fixed form replies;

receiving the message from a host;

selecting a fixed form reply from the plural fixed form replies independent of the message;

allowing a user to choose a reply from the selected fixed form reply ~~which fits the electronic message~~ out of the plural fixed form replies;

sending the chosen reply to the host; and

computing the frequency of chosen replies sent to the host.

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of managing an electronic message having a message content and reply choices to the electronic message, comprising:

storing plural fixed form replies in advance of the electronic message and the replies having reply contents independent of the message content of the electronic message allowing use of the said plural fixed form replies with other electronic messages;

outputting the electronic message with said plural fixed form replies; and

selecting, subsequent to inputting the electronic message, certain of the outputted fixed form replies ~~which fit the electronic message~~ out of the outputted plural fixed form replies as the reply choices to the message.

27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 26, further comprising:

managing the plural fixed form replies by data respectively specifying the plural fixed form replies;

totaling a number of the selections of each of the plural fixed form replies as the reply choices to the message; and

storing results of the totalization of each of the plural fixed form replies to the message in relation to the specifying data.

28. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of managing electronic messages having message content, comprising:

storing replies for the electronic messages with the replies having reply contents independent of the message content allowing use of the replies with more than one of the messages;

receiving the electronic message and presenting the electronic message to a recipient;

presenting the replies to the recipient and allowing the recipient to select one of the replies ~~which fits the electronic message~~ out of the presented replies; and

sending the selected one of the replies.

29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of managing a reply to ~~an electronic message~~ messages having corresponding message content, comprising:

pre-creating content independent reusable plural fixed form replies, the plural fixed form replies being freely assignable to a received electronic message; and

allowing a recipient of ~~an~~ the electronic message to select assign one of the plural fixed form replies ~~which fits the electronic message out of the reusable plural fixed replies as the a~~ reply to the electronic message.

30. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An electronic news system for managing an electronic message having a message content and a reply, comprising:

storing plural fixed form replies independent of the content of a first electronic message; sending the first electronic message;

selecting any response from one of the stored plural fixed form replies including fixed form replies having contents independent of the message content of the first electronic message;

sending a second electronic message; and

selecting any response from one of the stored plural fixed form replies independent of a message content of the second electronic message.

31. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for managing electronic messages, comprising:

retrieving stored selectable fixed form replies upon receiving an electronic message, the selectable fixed form replies being freely assignable to the enabled to be used with other electronic messages including electronic messages including electronic messages unrelated to the received electronic message thereto; and

displaying the received electronic message with a selected fixed form reply among the retrieved selectable fixed form replies, where a desired reply from the selectable fixed form replies is selected as a reply choice to the received electronic message.